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MONOLOGUES

BY

BEATRICE HERFORD

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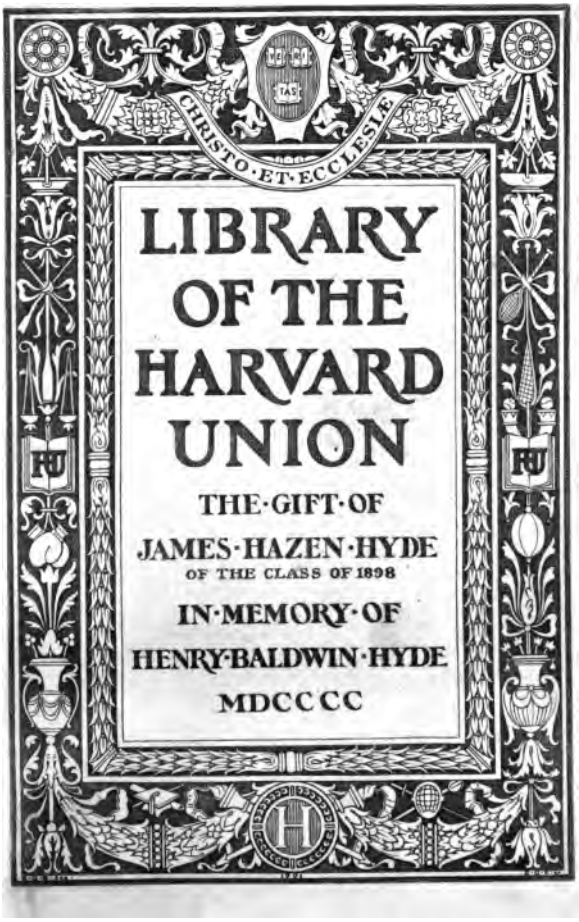

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MONOLOGUES

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MONOLOGUES

BY

BEATRICE HERFORD

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CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
NEW YORK - - - 1908

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"Yes, it would be lovely for ferns."

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this is the only one that's left. Mrs. Baker took one, she's crazy about it. ----- Yes, it would be lovely for ferns. ----- Oh, yes, I can do it up nicely in some tissue paper, I can put it in a box. ----- Yes, it's two seventy-five. I'll put the jacket right in the stove ---- there, now that'll be very easy to carry, the stove is very light. ---- Thank you ever so much. --- Yes, that's your change. ----- Who? --- Young Mrs. Fry? Yes, she's on the kitchen table, she's in a cook's costume, it suits her splendidly --- well, you know what I mean.

Tommy Hooper! You boys must not run against this table like that. Dorothy, don't touch those frames, darling, your fingers are so sticky -- they are two dollars -- no, I don't think I've got any-

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thing for ten cents. – – – – – No, that necklace is three dollars. Don't touch it – – – – no, we haven't any necklaces for ten cents. Now, Tommy, you've knocked down that picture, don't pick it up, you'll get it covered with candy. Dorothy, you've got a piece of peanut brittle right in your hair, – – I don't know, we haven't counted lately. – – – – – I say I don't know, we haven't counted. Now run away, you can get a grab for ten cents, Dorothy.

We might count the money again, Ethel, there must be a lot more by this time. You count the silver, and I'll count the bills – – – – – well, you count the bills, then, and I'll count the silver. We shall have to have a bigger box soon. Goodness! There is hardly any change!

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What has happened? There was such a lot. – – – – – Of course, it's in the bills. But it never seems the same, does it? Well, here's a dollar eighty and I owe the box fifty-seven cents, I'll call it sixty, it will be easier to add. (*Counts.*) Sixty and a dollar eighty are what? Two sixty? No, two thirty! – – – – – You're sure it's two forty? – – – All right, now how many bills have you got? – – – – – – Why, my dear, there must be more than that, we had eighty-five dollars ever so long ago, and I sold that rustic stove since then, and those baby jackets, and heaps of things, and that awful afghan. Let me count; ten and ten is twenty, and five is twenty-five, and ten is – – – well, I guess I'll count all the tens first and then the fives – – – – – please don't talk to me. – – –

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Oh, there comes Captain Carter, make him buy that sofa pillow – – – tell him Miss Farley made it. (*Goes on counting.*) – – – – – Ethel, I've got too much now. We couldn't have had a hundred and fifty dollars, could we? – – – – Oh, Captain Carter, are you good at counting? Don't you want to count this for us? – – – – Oh, thanks ever so much – – – – – don't talk to him while he is counting – – – don't you hate to be talked to when you're counting? I do, I can't count very well anyway and if any one talks to me – – – oh, excuse me, I'm awfully sorry. – – – – – Didn't you skip then? Weren't there two fives sticking together there? I thought I saw – – – no, I see – – – all right, don't let me interrupt you. – – – – – – – Have you been

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"Don't you want to count this for us?"

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to see the vaudeville yet? --- Oh, excuse me! I was afraid you hadn't heard about it. They say it's very good. --- You make it a hundred and thirty, do you? I should think it was all right, don't you, Ethel? That's fine, oh, no, we don't want to count it. I guess that's all right, thank you ever so much, you've been so good we won't make you buy a thing.

Oh, do you really want that sofa pillow? --- Yes, we can add five dollars to thirty all right. ---- Oh, yes, we've been awfully busy. ---- Yes, Mrs. Harris and Miss Newton are on this table too, but it's rather hard on us, they keep going off to have their fortunes told or have some ice cream, and we have to do all the work. ----- Why, we would

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simply love to, Captain Carter, but we can't leave now, you see.

Those are fifty cents – – – – yes, they are very pretty, aren't they? Those are a dollar fifty. – – – – Yes, for the pair. – – – Ethel, how much is this squash-pie pincushion? – – – – – Oh, yes, three dollars, you can use it for a paper-weight too. Yes, I think those candlesticks are very pretty. Did you see that little racing-car saltcellar? That ought to appeal to you. – – – – – Oh, yes, I forgot, they have all gone; it's too bad, they were awfully cunning. Mrs. Hibbard sent those, she sent the racing-cars and those copies of "The Simple Life" too. She said if the racing-cars weren't sold, she wanted them all back, I don't think she cared about the other things.

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Well! – Did you ever know anything like those people? They never bought a thing, they are as bad as Kitty Morrison. ------ Why, you know, Captain Carter, she's so stingy she won't buy anything, so she comes with a lot of packages all done up and every one who isn't on to it, thinks she's bought a lot of things.

Oh, Mrs. Harris, are you going to stay here? Because we've been invited to go and have some ice cream. There's the money-box, and there isn't much change, but you can often make people take a few more things to make their money come out even. And Mrs. Richards owes two dollars for the things she got, so if she comes you will know, and you'd better mark down anything you think you can sell. There are more of those

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tomato paper-weights under there if you want them. They aren't marked, they're two dollars. And Mrs. Allen says those plush thermometers are accurate. And if Mrs. Williams comes, tell her I've put her baby jacket in the pulpit, with her cake and rubbers.

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III

A LADY PACKING

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III

A LADY PACKING

(*An elderly English lady packing her trunk. Her niece is helping her.*)

NOW my dear, we really must get this box done. I sha'n't feel comfortable till I'm packed. We will put everything on the bed first, and then we shall know where we are.

Oh! first I want you to tell me about these caps, some one else can often judge better. I will just put it on. -- What do you think? Do you think this lace blobbs out too much? -- Yes I thought so, but I don't know, I think I can stand

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it. Would you move the bow? -- Round to the back? -- Oh, no! Not to the back, if I moved it at all, it would be the slightest bit to the left. That's all about that one.

Now there's this one: what do you think? I want you to tell me just what you think, do try and express an opinion. Is it just a little too, -- a little too dressy? -- with both the gold walnut and the geraniums? --- Yes, I know, that's what you always say, but I can't wear black velvet all the time, I must have a change -- What do you say? -- No, I never saw a gold walnut, any more than you did, but it's a very good one and you wouldn't like a raw one on a cap! --- Yes, my dear, I shall leave those geraniums, I must have some color. I should

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"Do you think this lace blobbs out too much?"

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think I have had those geraniums on one thing and another for twenty-five years. -- What do you say? --- You should think it was time what? I wish you would finish your sentences, it is a very rude trick you have. Now what do you think about this one? Do you think that hangs down too much? --- Yes, I thought so, but I don't think I should like it any shorter.

Now the next thing is -- shall I take all three? -- Oh! I must have that one! --- No, I can't do without that either, -- it isn't a quesiton of those two, it's just a matter of all three. What do you think? I can't need them all three. --- Do you think so too? --- Yes, I think you are quite right -- still -- perhaps it's safest, it can't do any harm at any

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rate. – – – Yes, I had better take all three. Thank you, dear, you are a great help!

Now, we mustn't dawdle, we must get the things in. We can put them in quite loosely, there is plenty of room. – – – Yes, my dear, I've been in this box before, I know there is.

Now there's the bell! Well, I can't see any one. Would you just see who it is, please? I can't see any one – – – unless it's one of them. (*Mumbles to herself, moving about the room. The niece returns.*)

Come, come, my dear, we shall never get done if we don't keep at it. – – – Did I? – – – So I did. Oh, I beg your pardon. Well, who was it? – – – Now, my dear, that is stupid, I would have seen her!

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---Well, that's what I meant when I said I wouldn't see any one.--Well, never mind, I dare say you did your best. Now, I want you to put everything in, it does make one's back ache so bending over.

Put the boots in first, we will lay a foundation of boots. Let me see, I must give you these, and I will put on the old ones. Wait a minute, I had better just find the old ones first. Oh, dear! Where are they? I expect they have got behind something, how tiresome of them! I dare say they have got under here, I'm afraid you'll have to go under.--- Well, I am very sorry, my dear, I would go under myself, if I were ten years younger.--- What do you say?-- Well, my dear, say you don't want to go,

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but don't say they are not there. Look out for your head! -- Are they there? -- Will you have a candle -- or an umbrella? --- Well, it is very strange. -- I'm sure I could find them. --- Well, if you're quite sure, --- of course, you have the advantage of me, being under. --- You had better come out, --- come, dear, come out if you are coming! --- Oh, my dear girl! You are a sight! You're simply covered! Well, I'm glad you've been under though. I always say she doesn't brush under there, and now I know.

Well, I shall have to put these in afterward, they are old ones and they will turn up at the end.

Now let me see what I can be doing, I don't want to bend over, but I like just

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"You're simply covered! I always say she doesn't brush under there, and now I know."

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to be doing something. Oh, I know, I will write a label, and then that will be all ready. (*Sits down at the table.*) Now, whatever is the name of that little station we get out at -- the one that's just near. You must know -- the little station -- quite a little one. --- Oh, dear! You ought to know. --- What do you say? --- I shouldn't ask you if I could. It's quite a little place --- you know. --- They know the station-master so well, his wife is their cook -- made such good soups out of nothing -- you must remember. --- I always thought you had a better memory than I had, but you don't seem to have any lately. It is rather a pretty little station --- has the name done in pink shells in a bed at one side. --- No, I know, but I thought that

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if you would try to see it as it looks, you might. (*Closes her eyes.*) Can't you see them? The kind they do fish in. You know, they had it the first night we were there, and poor Maria choaked so – – – I wish she would have it looked at, I am sure there is something wrong, the slightest crumb does it – – it begins with G – – Gooling – – Gullborough – – Garnley – – – What? That's it! Hillside! I knew it was something like that. Oh, what a relief! You must really try to cultivate your memory though. It's a good plan to learn some short passage every day.

Now, what about these vases? We had better settle about these at once, stupid things to ask one to bring. I told her I was very glad to take them for her, but I didn't want to. What

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do you say to putting each one in a pair of stockings? --- In what? --- Oh, no! I sha'n't do that! I did that once before. -- I was in a hurry, and Mary was helping me, and she said, "Put it in your body." It was one I was going to wear, when I got there, I wore it the first night -- it was a lamp chimney, and I had to throw the whole thing away --- I couldn't get the pieces out. I thought they were out -- I wore it at dinner the first night, and I felt this pricking sensation --- I had to ask them to excuse me and go and take it off. I had to throw the whole thing away, I couldn't get the pieces out, it's very aggravating to lose your body like that when the rest is quite good --- of course I had the bones, but still ---.

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Now, by the way, what am I taking? I had better know what I am taking. ---Let me see---I shall have the black on, and then if I take the alpaca and the good silk---. Yes, my dear, I am going to take that good silk. You know, dear, when I got it, I hardly wore it, it was so nice---and then they said it was getting old-fashioned and so I had it done up, and then it was as good as new, so I have rather kept it. But now I am determined to get the wear out of it.

Now I expect you are tired, dear,--well, we will keep on until it's done.

I think I will just try to find the train now, while you keep on, because that is so difficult, and then it will be over.

Now, where is that Bradshaw? I think

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you had it, my dear. – – – Oh, so I did! Here it is. Now then – – – Hillside, 542. Oh, dear! It's got a star! You know that one we took to go to Brighton the other day had a star, and we had such difficulty. – – – Hillside – – –. Now there's no star here! They really ought to stick to one thing or the other – – – – – – Now let me see – – – – Charing Cross – – Waterloo – – Cannon Street – – London Bridge! – – – How can it go from all those at once! – – – What? – – – Oh, I see – – But it doesn't say which one is best for me. – – – Which? – – – Charing Cross? Oh, all right, dear, it makes no difference to me, those big stations are all just as muddling.

Now here's a good one, eleven-forty, – – – eleven-forty-eight – – – twelve-two

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– – – twelve-eighteen – – – twelve – – – – Now my dear, it doesn't get there! A great pity too, they ought to let that one get there, it's such a good one. Now let me see, what is the next? – – – – Twelve-twelve – – – now, why do they put it twice over like that? – – – – Oh, yes, of course – – twelve minutes past twelve. Well, now that goes part way down, and then it's Mondays only. Now, how can a train get part way and then change to Monday? – – Supposing it was Friday – – – would it be the Monday following, or the – – –. Well, I shall just have to look at the arrivals, I must get there at any rate, whatever happens.

Let me see, it's so hard to look across quickly, four-twenty – – – that's a nice one, just in time for tea. Now, what time

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"Now, how can a train get part way and then change to Monday?"

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does it start? I will work back – – – four-twelve – – – – four-three – – – – three-fifty-one – – – three – – – – – why, it doesn't start! You see those that go don't get there, and those that get there, don't – – – – – – – – –. Well, really I give it up, you will have to see when you have finished, if you can find one that goes and gets there both, I can't.

Dear me, I feel quite exhausted, I will just go and get a bite of something, and you keep on. But don't lock the box. You see it's only Tuesday, and I don't go till Saturday.

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IV

PIAZZA LADIES

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IV

PIAZZA LADIES

(Comes on to the piazza, yawning. Pushes a chair forward and talks, leaning on the back of it.)

ELL, Mrs. Upton, how many afghans have you knitted since lunch? --- Oh, I don't pretend to be anything else. I'm just like a child – if you want me to be good-tempered you must let me have my nap every day. Especially after a lunch like that! --- Wasn't it? --- Well I wish you would; I've made up my mind several times to speak to her. Now she has nothing to do but to see to the comfort of

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the people in this house, and it isn't as if they were all tough – now those the other day were very good – so it shows they can when they like.

There's only two weeks more anyway! I shall have to be looking after my winter clothes just as soon as I get back. Who do you have? – – – Do you? Did she make that you've got on? – – – Is that so? Well, I suppose you wouldn't trust her with anything nice! – – – – – No, I have a Miss Harkins, she's real nice. The beauty of her is – – she's slow—but she fits elegantly! – – – No, I send it up to her. Yes, isn't it a comfort? It takes my appetite away to have some one sitting there eating and saying nothing.

Gladys, you are not to do that. – – – Because! Do you hear what I say?

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When Mamma says "because" she means it. – – I can't make that child mind a bit – – I might as well give it right up. And that new nurse I've got, hasn't much control over her.

Do you have trouble getting girls? – – – Is that so? – – – Well, I wish I hadn't – – – – I had six cooks the three weeks before I left the city! And, as I say, that nurse, she isn't very satisfactory. I wanted her to do waiting, and anything like that if the parlor girl was away. I told her what I'd require of her – cleaning the silver, dressing the salad – I like a nice polish on it, and all that – and she said "I don't care to go so deep into waiting."

But those cooks were the worst! We thought we were going to take a cottage

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then; one of them wouldn't go because she'd heard the bathing wasn't good, and the other was learning to wheel, and some one told her the roads were bad. I never knew anything like it, and I shall have to get a new waitress when I get back.

Girls are so inconsiderate; you do for them all the time, and they won't put themselves out at all for you. Now that waitress I had last fall ----- Yes, wasn't she? Well, you can't go by looks. She was all right when she came, then she developed this terrible toothache, and I got her some "pain-killer." I was expecting company, I couldn't have her going to the dentist's then. -- Don't you know, they always come back with them all out and look so awful at the table,

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and then her mother died! I was having that large lunch – – – – Why, Mrs. Upton, I did!—I sent it—I wrote all the addresses myself. Well, you were on the list – – why, I can show you – no, I tore it up – well. You know me well enough. It's absurd, we won't say anything more about it.

Well, the lunch was on Tuesday, and I had asked her if she thought her mother was likely to get worse or anything, and she said – – – or else I misunderstood her, but I thought she said – – – they thought she'd get better. If it had been Wednesday! Well, as I told her, she couldn't do anything – – – of course I was sorry for her – – and then the ice cream didn't come! It did seem as if everything was against me.

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Gladys, stop kissing that dog! I don't want you to give it another kiss -- well -- just one, behind the ear, but not on the mouth! --- Why, it's that Mrs. Carter's dog that sits at your table. Don't you know her? --- Oh, you do! --- is she? Pleasant --- is she? --- Oh, nothing, nothing. I --- yes, I used to know her ---- run away, Gladys! (*Bending over.*) I don't know as I ought to speak of it. (*Whispers.*) You see it isn't as if ---- (*Whispers again.*) And then the way she -- (*Whispers.*) Oh, my dear, I'm perfectly sure of it, it used to be as dark as mine!

(*Turns suddenly.*) Oh, good-morning! We were - just - talking about you. What a lovely day it is! Have you been in to-day? --- Was it? --- Now, that's

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"I'm perfectly sure of it, it used to be as dark as mine!"

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what I told Gladys! the water was cold! I didn't want she should go in, but she would do it. I think that's the cutest bathing suit of yours! I don't see how you thought of it! I'll tell you who has a pretty suit, that's that Miss --- what is her name? No, she doesn't go into the water. How homely that gray suit is! --- Your sister? --- Oh, no, I know your sister, oh, I didn't mean that one --- that brownish gray ---- ---- Oh, I wish I could! I used to bathe, but since I've had this heart trouble -- and then I have these terrible headaches. Now, the other afternoon -- you see I can't plan for anything -- I wanted to go with that party to the Golden Cascade -- they say it's elegant -- but my head was splitting, it's twenty

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feet wide and covered with golden moss, so you can imagine I didn't feel much like it.

Why don't you bring up a chair and join us? Oh, don't go; must you? ---- Oh, are you? Well, you've got a treat before you. Good-by.!

Do you suppose she heard? --- Well, how loud were we talking, not any louder than we often talk. --- Well, I don't care if she did. ----- Isn't she! --- Why, there's no fit to the back at all! Where did she say she was going? --- Oh, yes, to see those pictures. We ought to go to see those. --- Why, yes, don't you know? -- that young arsist is exhibiting them in the parlors of the Mashersquammit House. He sits at our table. I think he will be

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a great artist some day – – – I never saw any one eat so much melon! He's real ambitious. I think it's awfully interesting to sit right at the table with artists like that, see them eat and everything. He has very high ideals, he says he wants to paint the seven largest landscapes in the world. I hope he will.

I want a landscape ever so much. But I would just as soon have a small picture. I want one to go over where the water leaked through in my sitting room. I wanted one of those portraits by that – – – there's another name gone. – – – You know – – – he paints such elegant satin, and then he will have lace on it, and I don't see how they get that real look of the satin – showing through the holes of the lace.

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But he charges so much! Five hundred dollars a figure! I don't know but what a child would be less, or two children come to the same, but I know that's his price for adults. But those artists are so grasping -- why I'm sure the canvas can't cost much --- and the paint ---. Well, they talk about the profit on automobiles! I went to see him about painting mother, we thought we would have her painted --- I really didn't feel as though we could pay that for mother.-----Yes, my husband's mother. So I told him she always wears a long shawl -- you know -- he wouldn't have to paint her arms, I thought maybe he'd take them off, but oh, no! And I was perfectly willing she should sit side face -- it's quite customary to her to sit

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"If you can tell me what she sees in that young man, I wish you would."

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that way. But he wouldn't hear of any reduction, so I sent him a little note, perfectly polite note, of course, saying we were going away and shouldn't have it done that spring.

There! There goes one of those Remson girls -- do you like that hat? That parrot's wing and those bluets, and that orange chiffon and violets! Well, that's it -- it's too much. If it didn't have that red bow. Well, if you can tell me what she sees in that young man, I wish you would. ----- Is that so? -- Well they say they are not -- well, her mother is coming down next week. ---- Oh, yes indeed, I believe in chaperons. Gladys will always have a chaperon.

I guess they haven't one in the parlor now, did you ever hear such a noise?

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Oh, it's that Mr. Edwards. He's going round getting up a concert, I guess they're practising for it. He's going to try and get that Miss Wadley to sing -- I don't believe he will have much trouble, do you?

And that young lady that sits over there by the window is going to recite. ---- Who said so? ----- Oh, no, she's a professional, look at her hair! They say she does Shakespeare characters finely. I presume she alters them for the parlor. She can do two characters right together -- I've never seen her, it's only what I've heard. Now, she'll take Romeo and Juliet for instance, and she has this drapery, and she stands one way and she's Juliet, and then with a sweep of the arm she turns the

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"Well, perhaps that old lady don't wish to be rocked."

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other way and she's Romeo, it must be lovely.

Gladys, come off the back of that chair! Come right here to me. ------ Well, perhaps that old lady don't wish to be rocked.

I love reciting, don't you? I heard a little girl recite the other day -- wonderfully. What was the name of the piece? It was something like "Saved on the Track" - no, that wasn't it. Well, anyway there was this engine, and the child leaped -- no, the engineer leaped -- no, the mother. -- Well anyway somebody leaped, and it was very impressive! -------- No, she's not going on the stage at all; she's just a private child.

Gladys! Gladys! That child's never

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around when you want her. Oh, there's Dicky Prescott, I'll ask him. Dicky Prescott! Dicky! Isn't he sweet? I think he's the dearest little boy in the hotel. Darling, don't you want to go and find Gladys for me -- You don't? Why, I should think you'd love to! --- All right, no matter, I don't want you to. I wouldn't have you for anything. ---- Why, Dicky, you mustn't answer like that -- why, that's rude. Take that stick away! Stop! Why you're a rude little boy! Isn't he awful? I think he's horrid, I always did.

There's Gladys, thank goodness she's not like that. Come here, dear. Come here, Gladys, come right to me! Do you know if the train is in yet?—Oh, yes, it is, there's Papa now. --- No, Gladys,

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you're not to run and meet him. Come back! Gladys, Glad---, well! The gentlemen are so hot when they come home and she hangs on to them so. Of course they say they like it -- and then she thinks she'll get candy. I wish she wouldn't eat so much, but she will.

Now, who's that with Mr. Springer? It's my brother! No, it's not -- it's -- yes! Well, don't speak to me! No, it's not that one --- worse, my dear. You know I told you about them --- business, my dear, business. Thank goodness, his wife's not here! (*Gets up smiling.*) How do you do! I'm real glad to see you! But where is Mrs. Fowler? -- Is that so? Well that's too bad, she'll have to come another time. Don't you think it's pretty here? ---

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Do you think so? Why, we think there are so few. But they don't bite me anyway, so I don't care. I don't need to ask if it's been hot in the city to-day! ----- Oh, you look all right! But Mr. Springer always comes home a perfect sight - would you believe that collar had ever had any starch in it? And you didn't get your hair cut! Isn't he awful? And you didn't bring that basket of fruit! I've been looking forward to it all day. Oh, did you mail that letter I gave you?—You did? Oh, what shall I do? He's awful about letters, he never mails them -- and I forgot to put the sample in -- and I counted on his not mailing it -- you see you can't count on him at all. Isn't he terrible? I hope you're not like that, Mr. Fowler.

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Oh, excuse me – Mrs. Upton, you've heard me speak of Mr. and Mrs. Fowler – Mrs. Upton – Mr. Fowler, Mr. Fowler – Mrs. Upton. (*Turns to Mr. Springer.*)

Well, is there any news? Don't sit down! There isn't time – – you've got to go and dress for dinner. – – – You're tired? Tired? Just sitting in that office all day! – Tired! Well, I wish you'd just stay at home with me one day, and you'd know what tired meant. Gladys, give that ear-trumpet back to Mrs. Remson, my dear!

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V

THE COUNTRY STORE

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V

THE COUNTRY STORE

OOD mornin', Miss Cummins -------- Yes, ain't it cloudy? But I think likely it will fair away, it's looked so dreadful dark all the forenoon, I was 'most afraid it was settin' right in for a rain. --- Yes, we have had a sight of bad weather lately. I think along the first of the summer it didn't seem to be so bad, but I was sayin' to my sister this mornin' it seems to me we've had day after day of real bad weather. ---- Oh! yes indeed, that is awful, and you can't do anythin' for it.

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My cousin had it, she suffered for years but she couldn't do nothin' for it, and I've had a good deal of it myself. There's things you can do, but it ain't lastin'.

You did? Yes? Well, I never heard of that, I presume it's very good. ----- It wasn't? ---- It didn't? ---- No, that's so. ---- You did? Well, I've heard of that and they say it's very--- It wasn't? ---- It didn't? ---- No, it's just as I say, there's nothin' lastin'. They say sweet things is awful bad for it, but now I ain't great for sweet things. I don't make no use of sugar in my tea or coffee.

Well, there's nothin' else you's wantin', Miss Cummins, was there? If those buttons ain't a match you can bring 'em back and I'll change 'em—if they ain't

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off the card. – – – Yes that's a nice button. It's more serviceable than a bone would be, and yet it ain't so heavy as a cloth button. – – – It's a real neat button. – – – – – Yes, it's a lady-like button.

I give your mail to the Jones boy to carry up, Mr. Atkins. There was a postal card from Sarah and two papers. – – – – – – No, we ain't got that. We never carried it, but we will have it. I guess we'll have it by the end of next week, or the first part of the week after. There's so many of them cereals, I think if you kep' all of 'em some one would come in and ask for a different kind. – – – I don't think they amount to much anyway. – – I think the reason folks like the taste of 'em is 'cause there ain't no taste to 'em.

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I sha'n't be able to send your goods around till late in the afternoon. You see, we ain't got no boy yet. Abel Innes does considerable for us, but he can't do nothin' till school lets out, and he don't get around very smart --- he ain't real brisk --- and then he's acquainted to all the houses, and he gets talkin' with the folks. Now yesterday I sent him with a basket of goods to Miss Parker's and I wanted he should come right back and carry over some linseed meal to Miss Allen's folks. --- They was waitin' for it to poultice her aunt. I don't know as you know how sick she's been. She and her sister expected to go away last Saturday. The doctor wanted she should wait over a few days. Her sister's had a real hard cold, she can't seem to get rid

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"He's acquainted to all the houses, and he gets talkin' with the folks."

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of it, and he wanted they should wait until the open cars was taken off. Some folks can throw off anythin' like that real easy, but she ain't strong anyway. So when he got to Miss Parker's he says she was tryin' to get her horse down in the pasture, and he thought he ought to help her, she'd always been so kind to his mother. He don't mind sayin' what he's been doin'. But we'd like some boy from out of town. ----- Yes, that last boy we had was real good, he was a handy size, too, he could reach down anythin'.

Do you care for any of these rubber-neck lamp mats? They're real pretty --- they're made out of this cotton battin' plaited up and tied with pieces of worsterd. --- You see you can pull it

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out large around the lamp, or fit it around snug. They're somethin' quite new.

Good-afternoon, Miss Capen. ---- ---No, your pattern ain't come yet. It was skirt and coat pattern, wasn't it? Why, I thought ---- No, I guess it was Miss Summer's pattern that come. Yes, hers come last week ---- or the first part of this week ----- I don't recollect now. I wonder how she's makin' out. She come in Friday and said she was havin' trouble with the coat, she cut the skirt first. Hers was a five-gore skirt, if I recollect rightly, but the coat didn't seem to be satisfactory, she says it hitched right up in the back.

Them dress patterns is splendid. I told her she must have cut the goods wrong, or else they're wearin' 'em that

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way this season. It's real hard to get a good set in the back, I think, anyway. I think Miss Neal usually gets a nice back. Do you recollect Miss Tracy's winter sacque? It set sweetly in the back, and I think for a best dress, goin' in the cars, or wearin' to meetin', folks notices the back more than the front anyway. They say a great many has the coats boned now. Miss Perry had a bone in her back but she had it took out – – – she didn't like the looks of it.

Did you want to get the goods for your suit now or wait till your pattern come? – – – – – I've got a lovely piece of goods here I think you might like. It's a real soft piece, it's a kind of a plaid, and yet it ain't real defined. – – – – – – – Yes, it's nice-feelin' goods, ain't it?

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It's a nice, heavy piece of cloth, and yet it's a light-weight goods. I think that would look handsome with some of them morey-silk reveres and some of them jet buttons. They do say sleeves is to be large again at the top. Miss Sibly says she's changed a pair of hers, and they look fine; she's took this part and put it right up at the top, and she says they're just in style.

I won't have your cranberries till the last of the afternoon, Sam. Could you call in for 'em then? ---------- Oh, they'll be nice ones. How were those eggs? ---- were? well, it's too bad. They're real scarce. ------ No, that's so, they've got to have a rest some time, same as every one else, but those eggs come from Bartlett's. Of course,

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they was box eggs, but he 'lowed they was equal to new-laid.

Oh, she ain't feelin' well at all, Miss Capen, she ain't been down in the store for two days. She ain't eat nothin' for a week, and what she do eat don't seem to do her no good. She don't seem to have no strength and the least thing pulls her right down. It ain't no sort of use for her to come down into the store, it just excites her all up. She come down yesterday, and tried to match some worsterd for a lady that come in, and it seemed to unnerve her entirely; it was an odd shade, and she said she felt kind of weak all over. But if she just stays real quiet up-stairs and works on button-holes, she's all right.

Yes, indeed, I miss her down here

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ever so much, she always tended on the mail, and folks seem to write more lately than ever they did. I think it's a waste of time. You'd be surprised how many postals folks will send about nothin' at all. It usen't to take no time at all sortin' the mail, but now, land sakes! It's somethin' awful. And them picture postals, there ain't no sense to 'em, they take your time just the same, and after all there's nothin' on 'em.

I hear the Tyler girl's comin' up to spend next Sabbath with her grandmother. I'd like to see her real well. They do say she looks just the same, but I don't see how any one could visit all them foreign countries and keep lookin' just the same. I am glad she ain't goin' to take up with one of them foreigners.

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Miss Tayler was tellin' me of some friend of her cousin's that kep' company with one of them Italian Counts for quite a while and then she come home and nothin' come of it at all. I shouldn't care for livin' in one of them villers they talk so much about. I have enough trouble with cold feet as it is; them floors must be somethin' awful in winter time.

No, I ain't got any rubbers. We've never carried 'em, but there's been so much call for them this rainy spell, if I thought it was goin' to last, I don't know but I should get in some. There's a good deal of loss to shoes and rubbers, 'cause of the sizes. Folks have to have just their size. My brother has a shoe store up to Pittsville, and he says he

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often fits folks to half a size larger and tells 'em it's their size and they never know the difference. He says he'd never get rid of his stock if he didn't, he says it's better for 'em to wear a size larger anyway, so it's just as well.

What was the other thing you was wantin'? ---- Oh, dried apples. A couple of pounds I suppose? I've got some nice ones just come in. That lady that keeps the boardin' house up to the Pines bought out all I had last week. I see several of the boarders has just left, they come in here to leave their address in case of any mail. They was kind of youngish --- maybe they didn't find it gay enough, but they do say they had a gentleman there this summer. I never seen him, but I hear he left on Tuesday

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"I never seen him, but I hear he left on Tuesday."

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---that was the day before she come in for the apples.

That was two dollars you gave me, wasn't it? ------ Twenty-three and two is twenty-five, thirty-five, forty-five and seventy-five -- one dollar, and one is two dollars, thank you. ----- Goin' to put those right in your bag? I could put a string round 'em for you just as well as not. Well, you can't hurt 'em anyway, that's one thing about dried apples.

Oh, you do? ----- You want me to send the flour the first thing in the mornin'? All right. We ain't got no more of the Pearl Flake, but the Comfort flour is splendid -- then there's a new flour, it's called "The Belle of the Ball." Mrs. Jolly uses that and says there's nothin' like it. She says it's

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lovely, it's so light and nice. She says every one down their way is crazy about it. She says she was in to Mrs. Watkins's the other afternoon, there's a good many was invited in, I presume, to meet her married daughter, and she said they talked of nothin' else hardly but that flour. She was the first one to try it, and she's goin' to get ten orders from other ladies, and she expects to get a roll-top desk on 'em. Mrs. Torry did the same down to Pittsville and she got a banquet lamp and she says it makes the finest biscuits! ------ You think you prefer the Comfort? ---- All right, I guess I can send it the first thing in the mornin' ----- half a barrel -- yes.

Those are lovely apples, Mr. Baxter. --- Yes, baker's, and they make elegant

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sauce too ------- No, they come from Mr. Daniel's farm. You knew he'd married again, didn't you? ----- Yes, it's too bad, she's awful close --- the other one was a real nice woman, we used to get big orders from up there, but it's very different now.

Well, Abel, have you got the mail? Was the train late? ---- You take that list and get the things ready to take up to Miss Tully's while I sort out the mail.

(*Stamps.*) Second letter this week for Sadie Brooks from Worcester. Wonder what's up, there. (*Stamps.*) Guess those is the Bates girls' weddin' invitations --- elegant handwritin'. ----- Another bill for Mrs. Brooks from those dressmakers --- she's nearly wore that suit

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out too. (*Stamps and then reads.*) "Expect to be out Friday on four-o'clock train." Is Mrs. Tracy's daughter-in-law's name "Florence?" ------- Oh! yes. (*Reads.*) I guess that's from Abbie Morris. I didn't know she'd gone away. (*Stamps.*) There, that's done ---- No, there ain't never much on that six-o'clock mail.

Now, Abel, you can put those in the boxes, and I am goin' to get my supper, and don't you be lookin' over the letters either, and remember that lump sugar is awful bad for your teeth.

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"I guess that's from Abbie Morris. I didn't know she'd gone away."

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VI

A PROFESSIONAL BOARDER

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VI

A PROFESSIONAL BOARDER

(*Enters and takes a seat at the table, nodding and saying "Good-morning" to the other boarders.*)

ERY disagreeable morning, isn't it? ----- No, I don't think I shall venture out to-day. I guess it's three or four days since I've been out; it looked so like snow yesterday, and Saturday it was so muddy, and Friday I expected my sister all day. There's such a wind to-day; I think it's colder than any day we've had yet.

You think Thursday was colder, Mr. Bates? ----- No, I don't either, Miss

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Brown. I don't think Thursday was as cold as some days we've had.------ Do you? Well, I don't go by a thermometer; I have a heavy sacque with an interlining, and I know I was too warm in it Thursday.

You won't venture out with your cold, Miss Parker, will you?----Oh, I think you're foolish! Aren't you afraid you'll add to it?----Well, I wouldn't go out just for that; it's two weeks to Christmas, you'll have time enough to get them. I think I've got most of my things now. I'm not going to give much of anything this year anyway. I always send the things just as soon as I get them, too. -----Oh, I don't mind when they open them, as long as I've got them off my mind. (*Turning to waitress.*) Hominy.

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A PROFESSIONAL BOARDER

I wish you would tell me something for a man. You ought to know, Miss Parker, with all your gentleman friends. – They never use the things you give them anyway. –– Now last Christmas, I gave my nephew some neckties. I chose them very carefully; I didn't get him anything but what I'd wear myself. He's always in a hurry, so I got them all bowed up ready; there was a kind of buff-colored one with a blue sprig on it. But he never wears them.

Yes, I know, I gave him one last year, I gave him that "Gems of Thought" calendar, but he used to pull a whole week off at a time to use for shaving.

I'll trouble you for the salt, Mr. Taylor, before you go––– how's Mrs. Taylor this morning? ––– it's right in front

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of you --- did I say salt? I meant sugar -- she don't seem to throw it off at all, does she? I thought she looked dreadfully yesterday. I wish she would try something my sister uses. She's a constant sufferer, so she ought to know what's good for it. Good-morning, tell Mrs. Taylor I hope she'll be better soon.

She never will be as long as she's so set. Now I was in her room last night, while my bed was being taken down, and I should think I talked to her over half an hour, telling her what she ought to do, but it's no use; you see she's worse this morning. --- I don't see why some of her own family don't come and stay with her; they can't care much about her. ---- What do you say, Miss Perkins? ---- Oh, you're acquainted with

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them? ---- Where? – Well, are they all in Europe? Oh, there's only her mother and sister. Well, they can't care much about her.

Some cold bread, please, Katie,—graham. ---- No, I thank you, I can't eat any hot biscuit. I thought I was better a while ago, but I found I had this ------ (*Tapping her chest.*) I'm better without it. If I had my way, I wouldn't have it on the table at all. I think every one would be better without them.

That reminds me, I forgot my medicine. Katie, Katie! Will you please go up to my room, and on the bureau, back of that plush frame on the right, you'll see a tall, fat bottle, and right side of it you'll see two little bits of bottles; well,

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it's the one farthest from the large bottle I want.

I hear Mrs. Phillips is coming back. No, she's going to have the fourth floor, back. I'm rather glad, because she's always said a good deal about never having anything but a first floor, front. I presume she'll say she prefers it now on account of the view.

Yes, Mrs. Watson's keeping her old room – I know because I heard some one say they heard Mrs. Prescott telling some one that she was very much disappointed, she had a chance to let the whole floor for the winter. I suppose she had the refusal of the room, but I should have told her she couldn't have it. (*Takes pills and drinks some water quickly.*)

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"Where my sister boards she says the table's splendid."

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Katie, please bring me some hot milk, this coffee is entirely too strong.

Where my sister boards she says the table's splendid. She has a small room, but she says the coffee is just like home-made; of course she isn't in it much, and as I tell her I'd rather have a small room where the table is good -- and then she says the other boarders are all so unusually pleasant.

Good-morning, Mrs. Watson; good-morning, Daisy, going to school this morning? Do you like your teacher? Well, I guess you haven't any tongue.

Oh, Daisy! that's not pretty. Well, I suppose you wanted to show me you had one. (*Turns to lady at her left.*)

Well, some children talk too much. My brother's children are dreadful! It's

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no pleasure to be with them in their own home. He wasn't brought up that way and doesn't approve of it, but my sister-in-law has no more idea of bringing up children than -----. They are very different when they are with me; but of course, she won't listen to anything I say.

What are you drinking, Daisy? Don't you like milk? Tell Mamma she oughtn't to let you have coffee. ------ Yes, I suppose it's very weak, but it seems as if she was very young to have it.

What did you say, dear? Oh, going to have your picture taken, is that so? Where do you go, Mrs. Watson? ---- Oh, no, I don't care for his pictures at all. I had mine taken there, and I wanted to burn them all up - but they

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"My brother's children are dreadful!"

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cost so much – so I gave them all away to my relations.

Do you think they were good, Miss Clark? – – – – – I don't see how you can say so. – – – – Well, every one thought they were good. I don't think they looked like me in the first place.

No, I don't care for those artistic photographers. You see they won't let any one into the room with you, and of course they don't know your worst side as one of your family does. The day I went, my sister went with me, and two cousins of mine, and I thought if they all came in I should feel more natural, and they could tell him how to take it. But he shut the door right in their faces, of course everything he does is considered so artistic, but I thought it was awfully rude.

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And then I fixed my hair on the side I thought he was taking, and when it was finished it came out the other and was all drawn tight and looked horrid.

Good-by, Daisy; I hope you'll sit nicely for your picture.

Not a pleasant child at all, is she? Very badly brought up. I should think her mother would want to have a good picture of her, she's very delicate looking. She's very healthy looking, the mother—yes, Mrs. Watson, it's a pleasure to see her eat, isn't it?

If you haven't any appetite yourself, it's a comfort to see others enjoy their food. --- Trouble you for the toast, Miss Bates ----- (*Nods to Miss Parker, who is leaving the table.*)

You take my advice, Miss Parker, and

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"But he shut the door right in their faces—I thought it was awfully rude."

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don't go out with your cold. (*To lady opposite.*)

Very nice young lady that Miss Parker. (*To lady opposite.*) Do you know anything about her family? --- Oh, no, I don't, I only wondered if you did, she always seems very nice, but I don't know, a young lady all alone in a boarding house, that way --- it always seems a little ---------- (*Drinks her coffee.*)

Good-morning, Mr. Walker -- no, you are not the last. I suppose you were pretty tired this morning, I think I heard you come in rather late last night -- didn't I? Well, I heard some one about half-past one, I thought it was your door.

Did you get your letter? I noticed there was one for you, because the post-

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mark was Marshville, and my sister used to live there. I wondered if you knew any one there that I did.

Oh, you haven't been there? Well did you ever hear your friends speak of the Rices? Very large family, lovely family. Or any of the Grays, or Parsons, Dennises, Updikes? Mr. Updike is a fine-looking man, isn't he? ----- Oh, you've never lived there! Of course. --- Who? No, I'm not acquainted with them, but of course I'm familiar with the name, several sons ------ Oh, aren't there? Well, it's a good while since my sister lived there. It's a lovely place, the residential section is very handsome, some beautiful homes there, and new homes being built all the time. The library is very fine, isn't it? ------ Of

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course, I keep forgetting you haven't been there.

Well, I guess I'll go along. (*Folds her napkin and gets up.*) Katie, give me a glass of milk, please, and I guess I'll take up an orange. Is there any of that celery, Katie? ---- Well, if you'll see, please. Charlie is so fond of celery, I thought I'd take him a piece. ------ Oh, he's better, thank you, come in and see him some time. He don't look very well. ----- Yes, he's moulting.

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